

Sam: Alright, so um, yeah, I saw that I think he might have said 60 or something like that I'm not quite sure of the exact number. Okay, so maybe could you just talk generally about your experience and then I can just ask more specifics after that.

WISE: Okay, from here on out. OED means the Office of Equity and Diversity. And Dean Ellis did write in the la times a letter saying that no one ever informed him of these sex harassment complaints against professors in the Marshall school. It sounds weird, but I believe him because the lines of communication at USC are all top down. It's a completely autocratic top down model. And I'm not at all surprised if the Office of Equity and Diversity didn't get back to him. It's one more justification for the authentic reform of our complaint process at USC. Now, I had a student I had a female undergraduate student two years ago, who was taking a class at the Marshall school as a result of the International Relations Global Business major. And she was in a class with about 60 students and the male Professor made boastful comments about his relationships with women and his conquests with women. And he also made public statements about her physical attributes in front of the class. In fact, she was a very beautiful young woman. And at some point, you know, she or someone had asked a question about the mid mid term. And he said to her in front of everybody, 'don't worry, you'll get an A, you're beautiful.' Don't quote that one because then he's going to know who filed the complaint against him. All right? But, you know, he talked about her legs. And her physical attributes, just they talked about her physical attributes. She was absolutely terrified to file a complaint. She was terrified of him. She came to me. I had been mentoring her she's graduated now, I had been working closely with her on a number of mentoring projects. And so it took me eight months, but they refused at the Office of Equity and Diversity, to do anything until she came forward. So she came forward finally. I went over there with her, I could not meet with them with her, but I did take her over. She met with them. It might have been 45 minutes. And I also know for a fact that OED did bring this male professor in and did warn him about his use of vulgar language in the classroom, sexually charged language. If you look at the Faculty Handbook, any comments about sex are considered to be sexual harassment, and since he said it in front of an entire class, well I'm not sure he's harassing the whole class, but he's engaging in behavior that absolutely violates the code of ethics in the you USC faculty handbook. So that's the the kind of thing that she was dealing with: vulgar language, boasting of conquests over women, and talking about her physical attributes. That you can quote, that's a really good quote, all right. The content, the actual content of his verbal statements, suggested to me as a faculty member at USC, that this individual had been behaving this way for some time and saw nothing wrong with it. So I have no idea about follow up with his behavior. There been no more complaints. I don't know if there's been more complaints about him. I don't know if anybody else

complained about him, but my student complained about him. So I do believe that... I know, I saw the OED...I think he's the associate director something and I saw him and he said, 'I'm talking to [the professor] in an hour.' And I said, Okay, good. I was over there with something else. Another complaint, completely separate. So I think that a OED did what they're supposed to do, which is haul them in, and tell them to knock it off. And they did. I don't know if it worked. And I have no idea why they did not inform his Dean. If I thought that the dean didn't know about this, I personally would have gone directly to the dean. But I'm not supposed to do that, I would have done it to defend my student, right? I shouldn't have to do that. I shouldn't have to go to the dean. So, I at least got her. She was so upset. So very upset, and scared. So at least she had her say, she felt really good about the OED interview and about the anonymity, like with they would address it to him in ways that wouldn't reveal her identity. So, she, I know, I took her to breakfast afterwards, she felt very good. But if that now, now, this is not to be quoted. That is pretty Mickey Mouse stuff. All right. If all of the complaints are at that level, I can see why OED wasn't running to the dean with them. However, however, I think there were many more serious complaints. And again, just the fact that this individual would speak that way in front of 60 students and think that it's a joke and funny is... you know, really... as I told OED the business school has a tits and ass culture. you know, so I can't, all I can speak for is my behavior, my student's behavior, and what I perceived to be a good outcome. I know, they spoke to him. And I assume since the Dean's been fired, this guy's really you know, zipped his lip, I have no idea. If he hasn't done any, and then he's gonna, you know, get into a lot of trouble.

later in the convo

WISE: So, is this what you're looking for?

SAM: Yeah, generally, I just wanted to understand what had happened more and maybe get your opinion on it. Is the way that you see it, kind of what I'm getting from this is that do you put the fault on Ellis for not having known or do you think that this will end? Or do you think that the system itself is just a flawed one?

WISE: I think that when a complaint of sex harassment goes to OED, it should automatically go to the dean. I'm shocked that it doesn't automatically go to the dean. In the Dornsife college where I am, it automatically goes to the dean, a copy to the dean, rather. So, I believe him. I don't think he's lying, although something seriously wrong with this situation. Right? And you know, OED felt that they couldn't do anything. Until, you know, the student complained herself. But if they copied the dean, there's nothing to stop the dean from hauling him in and saying, 'what are you doing?' What's going on? Right? There's nothing to stop the dean. They always say we have to wait till OED makes a decision. Well, they make a decision, but then it's up to the

dean to decide what to do to the individual. Right? So, I believe that sometimes, you know, Deans hide behind OED. 'Oh, we can't make any decisions until this comes through. Well, then it comes through. Yes, this is sex harassment. And then it's up to the dean to do something. And my hunch, is that again, I don't think he's lying. I don't. But I, my hunch is that many Deans don't do anything. I don't know about him. But they might not know. I mean, my Dean knows. Okay. I know, she knows. And, in fact, I have personally copied her on to other complaints in my department involving sex harassment, so she, she knows. But it's really strange, Sam that he didn't know, again, I believe him. I'll give him the benefit of the doubt, but it's very strange.

SAM: Okay. You mentioned that you have a hunch that there's been more serious complaints. Why do you think why do you think that?

WISE: Because the ease with which this individual threw around really vulgar statements about women and sex. The ease, the comfort, he had a very high comfort level with this. That suggests to me an atmosphere where that that's not really you know, that that that that that to me is the atmosphere anything goes so please don't quote me on suspecting there's deeper things. Or saying, my case is Mickey Mouse. But if one professor feels so at ease, making these vulgar statements in front of 60 or more students, that reflects the culture in the atmosphere to me.

SAM: Okay. That makes a lot of sense. So, when you said Marshall, that you think Marshall has a tits and ass culture? You mean, does goes to the same sort of thing that you just said?

WISE: Yes. Like comments, tits and ass comments you know what I'm saying?

Sam: Do you know of anyone who maybe we should be speaking to as well, because like, like you said, in the piece he talks about there being 60 some complaints that he didn't, he wasn't made aware of. We've tried to talk to OED in they are...it's unbelievable how non transparent they are with us when we go and try to speak with them about anything I understand there has to be confidentiality, but there's no, they're just they're... we don't get we can't get anything from them.

WISE: They work at the behest of the President, the provost and the deans, they don't work at the behest of victims. That is what is basically the norm at USC. They cover their butts, right? And in the end, they don't really get to rule. They make suggestions for the dean. And so the dean can say, 'Oh, this has been through OED and, you know, everything's fine,' when it's not fine. It's not right. There's just you know, people do weird stuff illegal, you know, that violates Equal Employment Law. And then it's a big run around. The only reason this gain traction is because of #metoo. And was this like the 10th

scandal in two years? And this happened before Metoo. And, you know, I mean, OED wasn't exactly encouraging. They refused until the student came forward. Now, luckily, she came forward. And it was a positive experience for her because she was angry. So, that's where that stands. So, OED desperately needs to be reformed. It needs to represent victims of harassment, bullying, and discrimination. And they basically, close ranks, as you've seen, and it's all you know, smoke and mirrors, and then I've rarely truly seen, you know, any kind of sanctions or punishment. And this is where I think they're in big trouble. Now, Wanda Austin, got wind of these harassment complaints. I don't know how. But somehow there had to be a whistleblower inside there had to be right. Probably somebody out to get Jim Ellis because they could have easily taken and taken this to him first. And obviously they didn't. So I think Austin saw these complaints. I think she did the absolute right thing. I'm not sure she, I don't know how it was handled. I was away I don't know how I was on a leave I don't know how it's handled, any complaints about how it was handled. He's not going to get his job back. He needs Stop whining and complaining, you know what I mean? There are other deanships around the country, you him. It's over for Mike Quick. It's over for Anthony Kerry all these people, right? That you get power and you get locked into this stuff. And then you start convincing yourself that nothing's wrong. Right?

SAM: Okay, so just kind of to wrap it up. I'm looking for, like I said, housing, I'm always super non transparent with us. We're looking to try and flush out exactly what the complaints were about and how pervasive they were. How many there were who, what the nature of them were. So do you know anyone who maybe we should be talking to as far as professors who have dealt with it?

WISE: I don't know. I don't know. All I know, is that it just came at me. I think it was two winters ago, I believe. And it just flew in the face. It came at me. I could have just told her Oh, I'm so sorry. You know, oh, that's just terrible. And I'm not going to do that especially then metoo happened and then Nikias and I thought okay, all right. This is gone too far. Right. All these things.